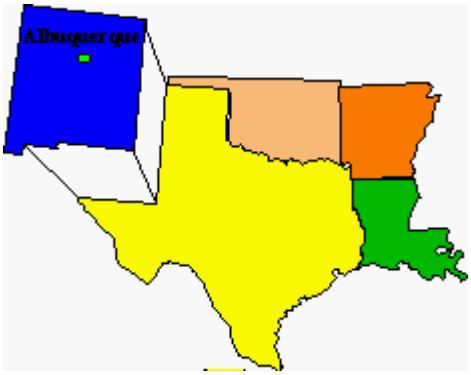
FRUIT AVENUE PLUME SUPERFUND SITE
Albuquerque, NM



EPA Region 6
EPA ID# NMD986668911
Hazard Ranking System (HRS) Score: 50
State Congressional District: 1
Fact Sheet Updated: July 2003

SITE DESCRIPTION

Location: The Fruit Avenue Plume Site is located within the city limits of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, Central New Mexico.

Setting: The contamination is contained in an aquifer underlying a portion of downtown Albuquerque, predominantly in the central business district.

The suspected primary source of the trichloroethene (TCE) is a defunct dry cleaning facility, "Elite Cleaners," which operated from approximately 1940-1970. The estimated size of the plume is 2/3 mile long, 550 to 1300 feet wide, and at least 544 feet deep.

Population: There are 187,327 people who receive their drinking water from wells within a four-mile radius of the source site. Within one mile of the site, the total population is approximately 6,000, a large percentage of which are workers, not full-time residents. There are two hospitals and two City of Albuquerque municipal wells located 1 to 1 3/4 miles from the source site.

Current Site Status and Cleanup Actions to Date:

- The site was added to the EPA s National Priority List (NPL) in October 1999, and the studies determining the extent of the contamination were completed in March 2001. That June, EPA proposed to cleanup the site using a variety of methods including soil vapor extraction and ground water extraction with air stripping and activated carbon filtration. EPA selected the final cleanup plan in September 2001. In June 2003, EPA completed the design of the cleanup plan. Upon completion of the cleanup work, the groundwater will be within acceptable federal drinking water standards.

- EPA and the New Mexico Environment Department have participated in numerous open houses throughout the Superfund process.

- EPA has provided a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) to the Downtown Action Team, a group of downtown small business leaders in May 2002.

- EPA will continue to ensure that the area water supply meets the federal drinking water standards, using data generated from the city of Albuquerque public water supply monitoring program.

- EPA continues to monitor the site to ensure there is no immediate threat to human health or the environment pending the start of long-term cleanup work.

Current Funding Status:

- EPA has spent approximately $1,250,000 on investigation and design work at the site.

- Region 6 will receive $4,000,000 to begin construction of the remedy in Fiscal Year 2003; an additional $1,800,000 will be available in 2004 to complete the remedy.

EPA Funding Process:

EPA funds cleanup work at sites that fall into three categories: sites that pose immediate danger to human health, sites where specific cleanup projects have already begun, and sites with the highest relative risks to human health that are near-term construction completion candidate sites. Sites that fall into the first two categories receive the highest priority for funding. Sites in the third category receive funding based on the availability of funds, the relative risk to human health and the environment as determined in part by the National Risk-Based Priority Panel, and other programmatic factors including the potential availability of responsible parties to conduct the work.

WASTES AND VOLUMES

The primary contaminant of concern is TCE, a chlorinated solvent, found at levels up to 90 micrograms per liter (µg/L) in the groundwater. The Maximum Contaminant level (MCL) that is allowed under the Safe Drinking Water Act is 5 µg/L. Tetrachloroethene (PCE), cis-1,2-Dichloroethene (cis-DCE), and trans-1,2-Dichloroethene (trans-DCE) are also found in some areas of the groundwater plume, but these contaminants are below their respective MCLs.

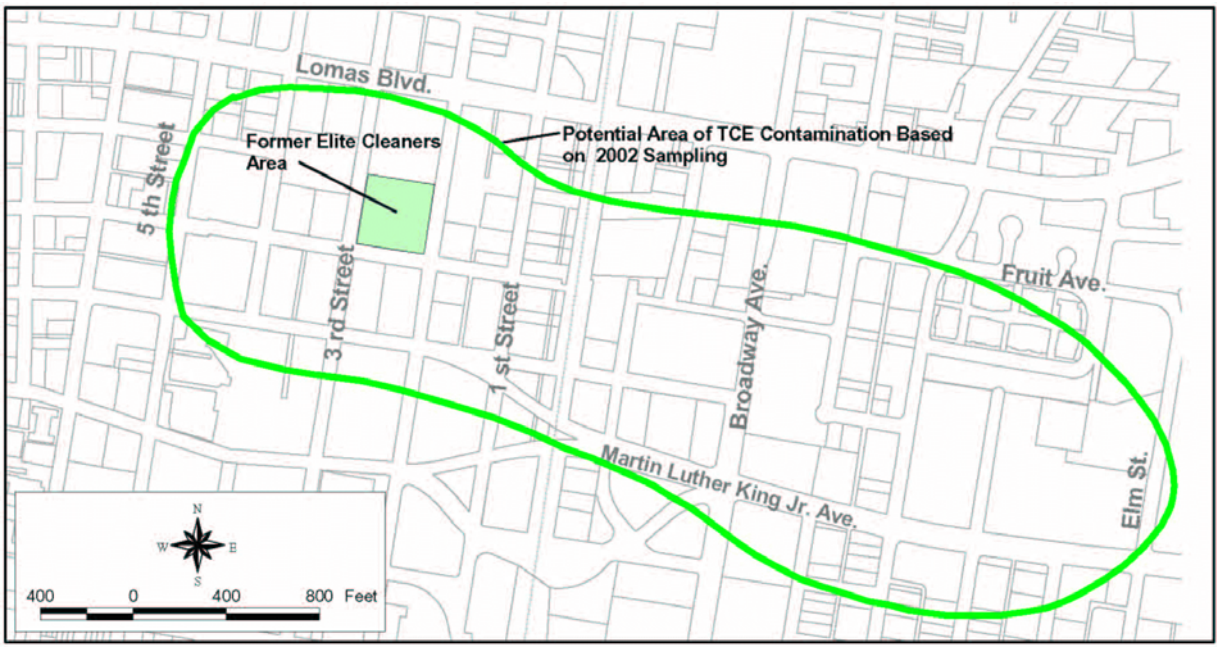
Chlorinated solvents are heavier than water and readily sink in groundwater. An exact or calculated volume of the chlorinated solvent (TCE) released into the groundwater at the former site of Elite Cleaners is unknown at this time. However, very small amounts of these chemicals can contaminate large volumes of soil and groundwater.

The area of contamination consists only of the subsurface soils and groundwater. Therefore, the ground surface conditions are safe for people who live, work, and visit the area in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST

NPL Inclusion Proposal Date:	July 22, 1999
NPL Inclusion Final Date:	October 23, 1999
NPL Deletion Proposal Date:	n/a
NPL Final Deletion Date:	n/a

SITE MAP



SITE HISTORY

- 1940-1972: The Site operated as a dry cleaning facility.

- 1989: Sight Discovery - The City of Albuquerque Environmental Health Department (AEHD) detected TCE in the Coca-Cola Bottling Plant well in downtown Albuquerque during a routine sampling effort.

- December 7, 1989: The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) conducted a Preliminary Assessment and completed a report entitled, "PA Narrative of the Albuquerque Industrial Center." The objective of the PA was to identify potentially responsible parties (PRPs) and remove underground tanks once used for chlorinated hydrocarbon containment at the Elite Cleaner's site.

- October 15, 1990: The NMED conducted a Screening Site Inspection (SSI) of the Elite Cleaners site, thought to be a likely source of the TCE groundwater contamination, and completed a report of the investigation entitled, "Screening Site Inspection of Elite Cleaners." The objective of the SSI was to install monitoring wells and determine the extent of the groundwater TCE plume.

- 1993: Environmental Consultant, Dames and Moore, Inc., conducted a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment in downtown Albuquerque near the former Norwest Bank building, collecting more information concerning soil and groundwater TCE contamination. In February, May and August of 1993, the NMED conducted an Expanded Site Investigation (ESI) of the former Elite Cleaners site.

- September 21, 1994: The NMED completed the ESI report entitled, "Expanded Site Inspection of the Elite Cleaners Site."

- February 10, 1999: A Background Investigative (BI) report was completed by the NMED to further research possible source areas of the TCE groundwater contamination and delineate the extent of the TCE groundwater plume.

- July 1999: The Fruit Avenue Plume Site was proposed to be listed as a Federal Superfund Site on the National Priority List (NPL) by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

- October 1999: The Fruit Avenue Plume Site was added to the NPL as a State lead Superfund Site with the cooperation of the EPA, the NMED, and the City of Albuquerque.

- March 2001: The Remedial Investigation (RI) report was finalized for the Site. The former Elite Cleaners was identified as the primary source of contamination, and the extent of the TCE groundwater plume was delineated.

- June 2001: The Feasability Study (FS) report was finalized for the Site. This report details the alternatives that were evaluated as possibilities for site remediation. The Proposed Plan, which discussed the most viable alternatives for site remediation was issued on June 27, 2001.

- A public comment period on the Proposed Plan was held from June 29, 2001 through July 30, 2001.

- The Record of Decision was issued on September 27, 2001.

HUMAN HEALTH AND ECOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT

There is a potential for elevated health/ecological risk levels associated with the two types of chlorinated hydrocarbon compounds, TCE and PCE, involved in dry cleaning spot removal and machine shop/industrial equipment degreasing activities.

TCE and PCE are the leading concerns at this site because they are known carcinogens recognized by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).

Other Health Considerations:

- The Coca-Cola production well had to be removed from service in 1989 when TCE levels exceeded its Maximum Contamination Limit (MCL) of 5.0 μg/L.

- The St. Joseph Hospital well was removed from service in December of 1996 when TCE levels approached the MCL. In 1997, this well exceeded the MCL for TCE.

- The Presbyterian Hospital well showed levels of TCE below the MCL in 1999.

- The City of Albuquerque municipal well, Yale 1, exhibited trace levels of TCE and PCE

in 1999. It is unknown whether the contamination source of Yale 1 is from the Site; however, Yale 1 well is located down gradient of the Site.

RECORD OF DECISION

Record of Decision Signed: September 27, 2001

The major components of the Selected Remedy, Soil Vapor Extraction plus Hot Spot Treatment and Shallow, Intermediate, and Deep Zone Restoration through Pump and Treat Technology with a Reinjection Component, consist of:

- Soil Vapor Extraction of contaminants from soil located on the source area property,
- Remediation of contamination Hot Spots in the shallow and intermediate ground water that underlies the source area property by injecting either a bioremediation additive or a chemical oxidant into the subsurface in order to degrade the contaminants of concern in place,
- Extraction and treatment of contaminated shallow, intermediate, and deep zone ground water by using a pump and treat system consisting of air stripping and granulated activated carbon, and by re-injecting a portion of the treated water,
- Placement of a restrictive covenant on the source property requiring that the asphalt cap remain on the source property until remediation goals for the soil are met,
- Implementation of ground water use restrictions until remediation goals for ground water are met, and
- Annual ground water monitoring to assess the extent of contamination and risks to human health.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Site Mailing List:	115 people
EPA Open House Meetings:	February 7, 2000; June 19, 2001
ROD Public Comment Period:	June 29-July 30, 2001
Proposed Plan Public Meeting:	July 17, 2001
Site Status Fact Sheets:	July 1999; June 2001
Community Relations Plan:	Issued March 2000
Constituency Interest:	Nearby residents are concerned about human health and real estate values. The community is supportive of EPA efforts.
Site Repository:	Albuquerque Public Library-Main Branch 501 Copper Avenue NW Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102 (505) 768-5140

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT

Availability Notices: July 22, 1999, October 22, 1999,
Letter of Intent Received: September 10, 2001,
Downtown Action Team (DAT)
111 Fifth Street
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-243-2230
Final Application Received and TAG awarded: 5/15/02 to DAT
111 5th Street, SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-998-4600
Technical Advisor Hired: 10/21/02 - R. T. Hicks Consultants, Ltd., Albuquerque, NM.

SITE CONTACTS

EPA Remedial Project Manager:	Donald Williams	214-665-2197 or 1-800-533-3508
Site Attorney:	James Costello	214-665-8045 or 1-800-533-3508
Community Involvement:	Donald Williams	214-665-2197 or 1-800-533-3508
NMED Project Manager:	David Mayerson	505-827-0184
EPA Regional Public Liaison:	Arnold Ondarza	1-800-533-3508

REALIZED CLEANUP BENEFITS

- Remediation of the contaminated media will reduce the health and ecological risk associated with the contaminants.

- Although only the sub-surface earth material and ground water are contaminated with TCE and PCE, the total land value will rise and the cleanup will encourage future business investments in the downtown Albuquerque business district.